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TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 6802
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UNCLAS LUXEMBOURG 000325

C O R R E C T E D C O P Y //ADDED SENSITIVE STATEMENT//

SENSITIVE BUT UNCLASSIFIED

SIPDIS

DEPT FOR EUR/WE VALERIE BELON

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [MARR](#) [PINR](#) [KV](#) [LU](#)

SUBJECT: LUXEMBOURG SOLDIER DIES IN KOSOVO

REF: CENTER-FREIRE NOTIFICATION 11/04/09

¶1. (U) A Luxembourg soldier died in Kosovo on 4 November near Mitrovica. Defense Minister Jean-Marie Halsdorf held a hastily-called, extremely terse press conference that lasted three minutes, during which he only announced the death, the age of the soldier (28), and the fact that the death was not combat-related. Halsdorf also signaled that the incident would not affect Luxembourg's current presence in Kosovo. Luxembourg's 23-troop contingent in Kosovo represents the Grand Duchy's largest overseas deployment. The troops are part of NATO's KFOR operation and operate under French command in Novo Selo.

¶2. (U) With the government providing no further information, speculation is that the death was a suicide. The soldier was reportedly a First Lieutenant and was the commander of the Luxembourg contingent. Government reports indicate the family has been informed and that an Army unit has been dispatched to Kosovo to investigate the death and repatriate the soldier's remains.

¶3. (SBU) Until the speculative becomes confirmed, the suicide angle is likely to spiral. We suspect Luxembourg authorities will announce the confirmed cause of death as expeditiously as possible to avoid any unnecessary tarnishing of the highly-respected Luxembourg Army, which could be sullied by unsubstantiated rumors. Major daily d'Wort's deputy editor-in-chief argued that the tragic incident, if properly presented to the public and in a timely fashion, could lead to an increase in the already strong support Luxembourg's overseas missions receive in the public sector. Luxembourg's military missions generally are the subject of very little controversy among the public, but in some sectors, Luxembourgers lament the little international attention given to Luxembourg's military contributions. A spotlight, albeit a tragic one, may increase that attention.

¶4. (SBU) Until now, Luxembourg's Kosovo contingent was primarily known for sparking true love and a royal controversy in 2004. While on a goodwill tour with his father to Kosovo, the Grand Duke's third son, Prince Louis, met a Luxembourg soldier stationed in Kosovo. When the two eventually had a child out of wedlock, Prince Louis lost his claim to the throne. The two eventually married and had a second child and in June 2009, the Grand Ducal Family finally bestowed a full royal title and privileges on his wife, the newly-coronated Princess Tessy. (NOTE: Prince Louis and his family are currently in the United States in F-visa status, while Prince Louis is studying at Florida Institute of Technology. END NOTE)

¶5. (U) Luxembourg has not lost a soldier on deployment in recent memory.

¶6. (U) Post point of contact is (acting0 POL/ECON Chief Adam Center, (e-mail: CenterAM@state.gov)).

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